Lignite Corporation Ltd. till date is indicated below:—

(Dues as on 31.7.95 for supplies upto 6/95)

		(Rs. in crores)
(a)	Monthly bills	Nil
(b)	Supplementary bills for rate difference	38.55
(c)	Others	2.26
(d)	Transmission charges	4.41
	Total:	45.22

There is no outstanding against TNEB as regards regular monthly bills.

(d) Tamil Nadu Electricity Board was regularly reminded by Neyveli Lignite Corporation Ltd. on various occasions to settle their dues.

Visit of Commerce Minister to USA

*193. DR. GOPALRO VITHALRAO PATIL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in order to boost the Indo-American commercial and trade ties, some high power delegation led by Commerce Minster visited USA in the recent past;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the objectives;

(c) whether Government have made some achievements with this visit;

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether a large amount has been spent on this visit; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (f) During his visit to U.S.A. in June, 1995 Commerce Minister addressed the Inaugural Board Meeting of the Indo-U.S. Commercial Alliance, which is a body comprising of private sector representatives from both sides, and also addressed a Conference on "Information Technology: opportunities in India". His other important engagements, *inter-alia* included, bilateral meetings with the U.S. Commerce Secretary, U.S. Trade Representative; meeting with silicon valley Indian Professionals Association, Washington, International Trade Association and other bodies engaged in promoting Indo-U.S. Commercial relations. He also called on some Senators and Congressmen. During the visit he was accompanied by an officer in the Commerce Ministry and was joined in U.S.A. by our ambassdor and other senior officers of the Indian Embassy. Private Sector representatives who had participated in the inaugural meeting of the Board of Indo-U.S. Commercial Alliance and Conference on Information Technology went at their own cost and no financial assistance was provided by Government for their visit. The visit helped in forging stronger Indo-U.S. Commercial and trade ties and also provided an opportunity for discussing various issues of mutual bilateral concern.

Shifting of original coal linkages

*194. SHRI V. RAJESHWAR RAO: DR. SHRIKANT RAM-CHANDRA JICHKAR:

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that original coal linkages had to be shifted to alternate sources due to non-development of linked mines;

(b) if so, what are the details of the cases and their locations in which this was done;

(c) what was done in the matter of alternate fuel supply; and

(d) how this has affected the commissioning of power projects in the private sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) Long-term coal linkages for Power Stations are provided and also rationalised as and when required by the Standing Linkage Committee (Long-term), depending on factors like long-term projected availability of coal, transportation logistics, time frame of supplies etc.

According to available information non-development of linked mines has not forced shifting of original linkage to alternate sources.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Export of Farm goods

*195. SHRI S.S. SURJEWALA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Union Commerce Minister, while addressing a meeting of Consultative Committee, assured the MPs that export of farm goods are allowed only after careful consideration of domestic requirements;

(b) if so, whether the same yardstick is applied to the domestic requirement of manufacturing industries and other industrial units; and

(c) if not, the reasons for discrimination?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. It is he policy of the Government to allow export of any item of mass consumption only after careful consideration of domestic requirements. The requirements of domestic industry are taken into account while formulating the Export Import Policy.

Import of Animal rennet

†196. SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that although import of animal rennet is banned, yet cheese made from animal rennet is freely being imported;

(b) if so, what is the policy of Government in this regard;

(c) the steps being taken to stop the import of cheese made from animal rennet; and

(d) the amount of animal rennet and its products seized at various ports and airports and land customs stations in the country during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c) Import of animal rennet is prohibited under the current Export & Import Policy. Likewise, import of cheese which is a consumer product is also restricted.

(d) Ministry of Commerce does not maintain such data.

Losses suffered by FCI

*197. SHRI O.P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in the 'Hindustan Times', dated the 24th and 25th July, 1995 under the captions "Food policy: Persisting with a folly" and "No takers for rice despite low price", respectively;

(b) if so, what are the points brought out in these news-items; and

(c) the reaction of Government thereto including on the subsidy meant to be passed on to consumers through the public distribution system being used to meet the losses incurred by the FCI, giving the details of the losses suffered by the FCI?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The newspaper article of 25th July, 1995 is critical of the hike in the Minimum Support Prices (MSP) allowed in the recent years and advocates a free market system of foodgrains trade. It also suggests that Government should maintain only RPDS and a buffer stock